

Remarks:

This amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay.

The claims have been amended to overcome the formal problems and define the invention with somewhat greater particularity over the art. More particularly, main claim 7 now describes an apparatus for shrinking a foil 26 wrapped about a stack 12 of objects and having an end portion 25 projecting vertically past an end of the stack 12. The apparatus comprises as shown in FIG. 1:

a frame 2 extending vertically adjacent the stack 12;

means including a heater 3 vertically displaceable on the frame 2 and directed inwardly at the wrapped stack 12 for shrinking the foil 26 thereabout;

a nozzle 19 spaced vertically from the stack 12 end, centered vertically on the stack 12, and having an annular array of outlets 21 inside the projecting end portion 25 of the foil 26 and directed generally vertically and outwardly at an acute angle to the end of the stack 12; and

means (passage 23) for supplying a gas under pressure to the nozzle 19 for directing respective jets 22 of the gas from the outlets 21 at the projecting end portion 25 of the foil 26 for inflating and erecting the projecting end portion 25 of the foil 26.

Thus amended claim 7 makes it clear that this is not a simple arrangement where hot jets of gas are directed at a heat-foil to shrink it around an object. Instead a special-duty nozzle is shown that is arranged centrally above or below an end of the object to be wrapped and that serve to inflate and erect a projecting end portion of the wrap foil. Once thus erected, when the projecting end portion is shrunk by the heater, it lies flat on the end of the object, allowing, for instance, an address card on the object to be read easily.

In US patent 3,853,218 of Grasvoll has an annular nozzle ring 28 with outlets 29 that as shown in FIG. 4 are directed inward at the object 7. They do not serve to inflate and erect a projecting end portion of the foil, but instead serve to shrink a plastic hood over the object. There is a projecting end portion 25, but separate clamps 30 are provided to move it in, and there is nothing to inflate it. A comparison of FIGS. 4 and 5 of Grasvoll clearly shows that the nozzle ring 28 is actually the equivalent of the heater of this invention.

In sum, the nozzle 28 of Grasvoll does not have an annular array of outlets inside the projecting end of the foil and directed outward so that a \$102 rejection is clearly impossible. There is no suggestion in this reference to inflate and erect an

end portion of the foil so it can subsequently be heat shrunk, so that a §103 rejection is similarly out of the question.

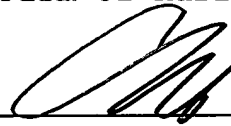
The other applied reference, US patent 5,502,947 of Birkenfeld, has nothing resembling nozzles as defined in claim 7. The hot air blown into the apparatus comes from an external annular nozzle with inwardly directed jets, as in Grasvoll. Thus this reference is largely cumulative to Grasvoll so that no rejection under §102 or §103 can be made on it, even in combination with Grasvoll.

For these reasons the claims in the case are clearly in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If only minor problems that could be corrected by means of a telephone conference stand in the way of allowance of this

case, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned to make the necessary corrections.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: None.

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